

Supplement B, Form I-589

Additional Information About Your Claim to Asylum

A-Number (if available)	Date
	04/11/2013
Applicant's Name SUJIWA WEERAPPULIGE	Applicant's Signature

NOTE: Use this as a continuation page for any additional information requested. Copy and complete as needed.

Part B

Question _____

My name is Sujiwa Weerappulige. I am a Sinhala Buddhist from 373/4, Malamulla East, Panadura, Sri Lanka. I was born on July 28th 1969 and I studied at Pallegama Maha Vidyalaya from January 1975 until August 1989. I studied up to year thirteen. Since 1995 I did odd jobs and in 1998 I joined a ship and sailed as an able seaman. I worked in ships until 2001 and returned to Sri Lanka. With the money I saved while sailing I started buying and selling food items in the Pettah Market. I purchased food items such as Dhal, Sugar, Flour, Potatoes, Onion and other dry food items from the importers and sold them to retail businesses. Gradually my business expanded and I found some regular customers from Vavuniya and Batticoloa area through a Tamil broker named Gunarathnam.

Gunarathnam was originally from Jaffna but he lived with his wife in Vavuniya. I supplied food items to retail business owners in Vavuniya and Batticoloa through Gunarathnam and paid him a commission. I started doing business through Gunarathnam since 2005 and in 2007 he brought a proposal to conduct a partnership business. He said that he would take food items to Jaffna and sell it to some customers he knows in Jaffna and we would split the profit equally. There was a very high demand for food items in Jaffna and the army didn't allow everyone to freely transport food items to Jaffna. It was only the businessmen who had influence with the army were able to conduct business in Jaffna area. Gunarathnam told me that he has contacts with the army personnel who handled the checkpoints on the way to Jaffna from Vavuniya and he would take care of it. Because of the high profit margin I agreed to share the profit that we would make from the food items that are sold in Jaffna.

I sent the first shipment in a truck to Vavuniya in 2007 and Gunarathnam successfully transported the food items to Jaffna and sold them. He brought the cash to Colombo and we shared the profit equally. Since then we continued with this business but decided to share the profits annually because of the risk involved. I was always afraid that I would lose my investment if something goes wrong. This business was not illegal but only the people who had connections with politicians and the army were allowed to conduct this business.

By the beginning of the year 2009 the war between the government forces and the LTTE became fierce and the army didn't allow any food items to be transported to Jaffna. I stopped sending food items to Jaffna but continued to sell food items to Vavuniya and Batticoloa.

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The army arrested Gunarathnam in April 2009 under suspicion that he had been selling food items to the LTTE. I learned this through Gunarathnam's wife and I visited her in Vavuniya. I gave her some financial support as I still had some profit money which I owed to Gunarathnam. I was afraid that the army was going to arrest me but the army never came looking for me. I believe that Gunarathnam had never mentioned to the army that he was conducting a partnership business with me. The army never released Gunarathnam and after about a year Gunarathnam's wife disappeared from Vavuniya. I lost contact with her and she never called me. I stopped conducting business in Vavuniya and Batticaloa but continued my business at the Pettah market.

In March 2012 a Tamil person named Kumar came to my house and claimed that he is Gunarathnam's younger brother. He told me that his brother Gunarathnam was still in army custody and I must give him the share of profit that I owe to his brother. Since I haven't met this person or I didn't have any instruction from Gunarathnam, I refused to give him any money. This person was very angry and he threatened me that I would have to face serious consequences if I didn't give him his brother's money. I told him to bring something in writing from his brother so that I can give him his brother's money. This person left my house threatening to take action against me.

About a week later two police officers came from the Panadura police station and told me to come for an inquiry on March 21st 2012. I went to the police station and I saw Kumar. The OIC (Officer-in-charge) asked me whether I owe any money to Kumar's elder brother and I told the OIC that I have conducted business with Gunarathnam but I have never met Kumar before. Then I explained to the OIC about the business I conducted with Gunarathnam and also I had to tell the OIC that Gunarathnam was in army custody. The officer started questioning why Gunarathnam was in army custody and then I had to explain that too. The OIC asked me if I was arrested by the army or questioned by the army in regard to my partnership with Gunarathnam and I said "no". The officer dismissed the case and told Kumar to file a case against me in courts if he had any evidence to prove that I am supposed to give him his brother's money. I returned home but I was very worried about giving information to the OIC about my business with Gunarathnam.

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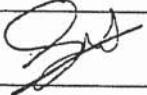
On March 23rd 2012 some army officers from the Panagoda army camp came to my house and arrested me saying that they have to question me about my business with Gunarathnam. They took me to a room at the Panagoda army camp and interrogated me. They falsely accused that Gunarathnam was an LTTE and I sold food items to the LTTE through Gunarathnam. They wanted me to explain to them how I conducted business with LTTE through Gunarathnam and how much money I made by selling food items to the LTTE. I told the army officers that Gunarathnam was my broker who helped me to find customers in Vavuniya and Batticoloa and also sold food items to customers in Jaffna for two years for which I paid him equal share of profit. The army officers started beating me calling me a traitor. They said that Gunarathnam is in army custody in Jaffna and he is been held by the army because he is an LTTE. I told the army officers that he was my broker and I never knew that he was an LTTE. The army officers beat me and mistreated me. They stripped me naked and tied my hands to a rope suspended from the roof of that room. They kept beating me time to time and threatened to kill me for selling food items to the LTTE. After about three hours the army officers started making deals. At first they asked me how much money I owe to Gunarathnam. I told them that I have approximately Rs. 500,000.00 which I owe to Gunarathnam. The army officers said that they would release me if I agreed to give that money to them. Since I had no other choice I agreed. They gave me a statement written in Sinhalese and told me to sign. When I tried to read it they threatened me at gun point and forced me to sign it. I signed the document and then they gave me my clothes. Then they locked me in a cell and went away.

I remained in the cell until the following morning. Then the same army officers came to the cell in the morning and asked me how I was going to pay them. I told them that I have the cash in my house. Then they took me in a jeep to my house and I paid them the money. After taking the money they told me that I must report to the army camp once a week until they finished investigations.

The news that I was arrested by the army and detained at Panagoda army camp in regard to an LTTE case started spreading in my town. My friends and neighbors started asking me several questions about it. Then I started receiving threatening calls from unidentified people to kill me and my family for dealing with the LTTE. The callers claimed either they were from the Jathika Hela Urumaya or Bodu Bala Sena. These two organizations are racial and extremist organization

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that exist in my country. Apart from this when I reported to the army some army officers threatened and mistreated me.

On April 7th 2012 four army officers came to my house in the night in civilian clothes and demanded for extortion money. They falsely accused me of supporting the LTTE and threatened to abduct and kill me. They demanded for Rs. 100,000.00 and threatened to take me away with them if I didn't give them the money. I told them that I didn't have enough money in my house as I have already paid a big sum of money to the other army for my release. They said that they don't care about it and pulled my daughter and held a gun at her face demanding for the money. Because of the fear I gave them Rs.. 50,000.00 cash and a gold chain belonging to my wife. After that they left my house threatening to kill me and my family if I told anyone that they came to my house and took money from me.

My wife and daughter were very afraid and I was very frustrated. we discussed and decided to go into hiding. I have a nephew who is living in Matara. He is a medical doctor and he is very close to me. I informed him my situation and went to his house in Matara on April 9th 2012. I didn't report to the army as I was afraid of the corrupted army officers and the racist, extremist people who were threatening to kill me and my family. Then the army started looking for me as I stopped reporting to them. I learned this through my immediate neighbor.

While in hiding I started looking for an agent who send people abroad. Subsequently I came across an agent who agreed to send me to USA for a fee of Rs. 1.5 Million. I agreed as I wanted to safeguard my life. The agent obtained a passport for me in May 2012 and sent me to USA embassy in Colombo with some documents. I faced an interview and a visitor visa was issued. I left my country on July 12th 2012 leaving my wife and daughter in Matara and came to USA on July 13th 2012. I am seeking asylum in USA as I fear to return to my home country. The Sri Lanka army is looking for me under false accusation that I sold food items to the LTTE.